

West Down Parish Council

County Councillors Report

November 2025

Bus Shelter.

Mike and John are up to date on latest developments, I will get back on to this when I return from leave.

Libraries- upcoming Consultation

The County Council Cabinet recently approved the launch of a **12-week consultation** regarding the long-term sustainability and future models for our library services. This is a vital process that requires input from every community to help us find the most effective and efficient path forward.

Our libraries, currently run successfully by the charity Libraries Unlimited, are undeniably invaluable local assets. We recognize the profound impact they have:

- **High Engagement:** Last year, our 50 libraries recorded **2.3 million visits**, demonstrating their status as essential community anchors.
- **Family Focus:** With over **113,000 active users**—and children representing the single largest group at 28%—libraries are fundamental to early literacy and lifelong learning.
- **Diverse Programming:** They hosted more than **12,000 events**, including crucial 'bounce-and-rhyme' sessions, digital literacy classes like Coder Dojos, and social groups, attracting over 218,000 participants.

A Critical Role in Rural Life

We must approach this review with careful consideration for our remote rural communities. For these areas, the local library is often much more than a place for books; it is a key hub for social cohesion and essential access. Libraries serve as:

1. **Warm, Safe Spaces:** Providing a free, neutral venue to tackle social isolation, particularly for our older residents.
2. **Digital Gateways:** Offering the only free public access to computers and broadband, which is crucial for digital inclusion—a necessity for accessing vital services, applying for jobs, and staying connected in today's world.

The challenge before us is how to preserve these core functions while ensuring the service is financially robust for the future.

The upcoming consultation is designed to explore a range of thoughtful options. These include innovative approaches such as revised, flexible opening hours; extending access through enhanced volunteer and technology support; and exploring the transition of some libraries into community hubs.

This transition would see local organisations take on management with ongoing support from the County Council.

I strongly encourage everyone to participate fully in the 12-week consultation. I will forward the details when they are available.

Local Government Reorganisation in Devon

Parish councils were invited to an online DALC meeting about LGR. If you were unable to attend there is a recording I believe.

[A stronger future shaped by communities: Devon unveils 'leading' option for local government change - News](#)

I have linked the press release above. Devon County Council will submit their preferred option for Devon by the 28th December, the final decision about what that will be will be made by the Devon County Council cabinet in November.

Road Closure (January)

Drainage works Road from St Brannocks Road to Mullacott Cross Roundabout, Ilfracombe

Thursday 30th October 2025

Devon Highways will be carrying out drainage works to undertake repairs to the gully system in order to prevent water flowing across the carriageway on the Road from St Brannocks Road to Mullacott Cross Roundabout. These works will be undertaken between Monday 5th – Friday 23rd January 2026.

As the drains run crossways under the carriageway, there will need to be a full closure for between 3-5 days in order to access the drainage system and then reinstate the road. We will then be able to complete the remainder of the works under 2-way lights. We will therefore be working in two phases:

- Monday 5th – Friday 9th January 2026 – road closure
- Saturday 10th – Friday 23rd January 2026 – 2-way lights

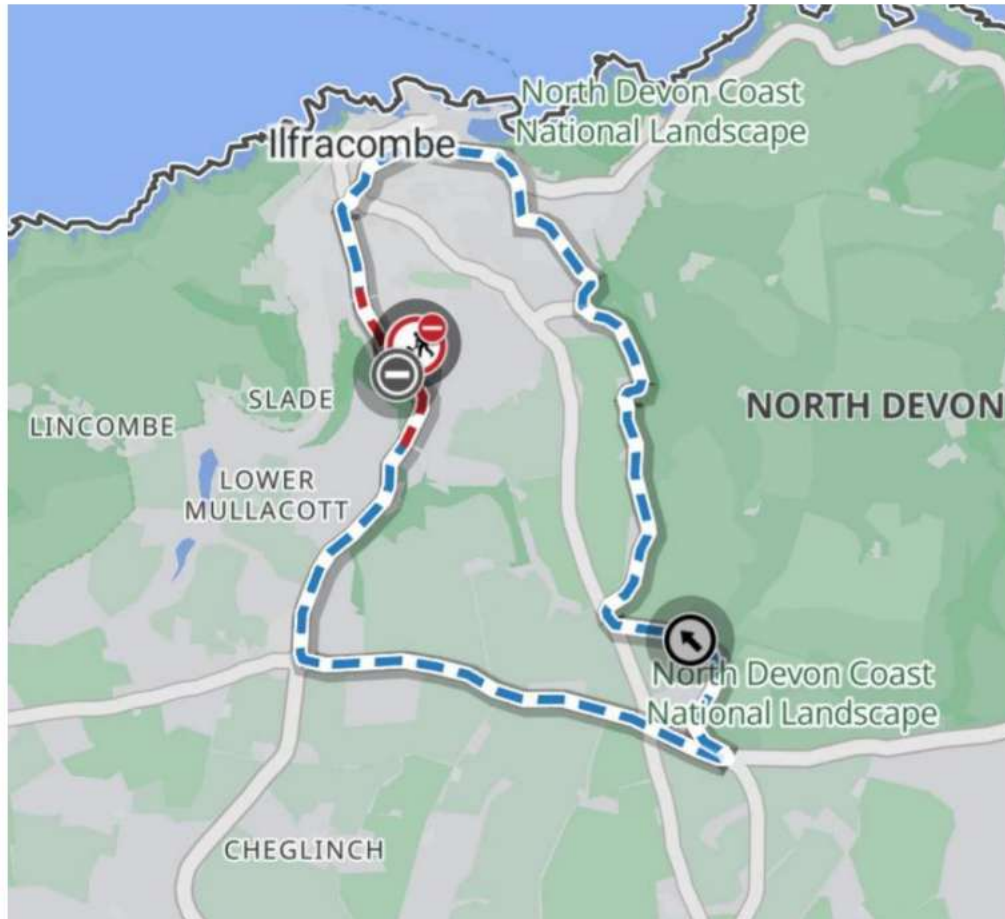
We will maintain access for residents within the closure but delays should be expected. Access for emergency vehicles will always be maintained. Please see below the works area*:



*Please note the orange dots attach the shaded area to the map, they have no other significance

Access queries should be directed to our Contractor or an operative on site during the works who will be glad to assist.

Please see the road closure and works area highlighted in **red** on the map below, the signed diversion route is shown in **blue**. Drivers with local knowledge may use alternative routes but these will not be advertised for safety reasons.



Any changes to the start date or duration will be shown on advisory signs on site. We will do our best to complete the work quickly and minimise disruption. Your co-operation and understanding are greatly appreciated.

Information on current and planned roadworks in your area can be found on the Causeway one.network: [Causeway one.network](https://www.causewayone.network)

Highway Defects

With the winter fast approaching it is more likely there will be defects in the highway network, this includes streetlights and signs.

[Report a problem - Roads and transport](#)

The DCC website is very useful for reporting problems and the reports go straight to the contractor. Alternatively the highway contact number is 0345 155 1004

If it's a river flooding the environment agency can be contacted on 0345 988 1188

Please do get in touch if you think I can help with anything; Andrea.davis@devon.gov.uk

Andrea

County Councillor

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